

**The Guided Discipline Approach**  
*Partners in Learning: From Conflict to Collaboration in  
 Secondary Classrooms*

Carol Miller Lieber (2002)

Educators for Social Responsibility  
<http://www.esrnational.org/home.htm>

As your small school begins to think about how to broaden the notion of “classroom management” to encompass a more open, collaborative, and personalized environment, teachers may begin to question how their individual classrooms can embody these ideals. How can a teacher’s classroom discipline align with the newly forming culture of the school as a whole, while tending to the needs of every student?

The Guided Discipline Approach, the second approach offered in this guide, has been designed with the whole school in mind; with the teacher at the inner circle, and the student at its center. The classroom is where we begin to instill self-discipline, decision-making, mediation, goal-setting, and reflection skills in our students. These skills carry over into the school community and beyond.

The book, *Partners in Learning*, represents fifteen years of Carol Miller Lieber’s work with Educators for Social Responsibility. But the Guided Discipline Approach is new, and therefore, the amount of testimonial and anecdotal evidence to its success is yet to be seen.

The Guided Discipline Approach is outlined here, with plenty of practical tools to begin using it in the classroom today, and scenarios teachers have encountered in the process. Educators for Social Responsibility has a wealth of information on their website, as well, which is worth exploring, and information on ordering *Partners in Learning* can be found there.

According to the NEA, classroom discipline remains the #1 problem identified by teachers. In framing this discussion of classroom discipline, I have to own up that I’m a big fan of the word discipline and its many meanings. I like thinking about areas in my life where I feel self-disciplined, where I can easily access tried and true qualities, habits, and skills that will lead to a job well done and a personal sense of well-being. I love the idea of engaging in daily disciplines that become comforting routines. I grew up in a disciplined household—there were ways that we did things in our home—but I didn’t get disciplined in the punitive sense very often. Rather, I was mostly shown and taught how to do something and then I was expected to learn how to do it for myself. The reward was in the doing and the internal satisfaction I felt from doing it. Disciplined practice of the smallest tasks gave me a sense of control, responsibility, and competence. As a student and a teacher I also love the notion of learning and practicing a discipline—whether it’s history or science, music or literary analysis. And even though there are undisciplined corners of my life that I don’t much like to visit, I also know

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that making room for my undisciplined self can help me think outside of the box and have fun doing it.

Think about yourself for a minute. How would you describe yourself when you feel disciplined and undisciplined? How were you disciplined at home and at school? When you were growing up how did adults help you become responsible and learn self-discipline? What kinds of support motivate you to be disciplined in some areas of your life? When and how has practice helped you become more disciplined? How do you feel when you have a sense of self-control in your life? What happens when you don't? Your personal responses to these questions can help jump-start your thinking about establishing and maintaining effective discipline in the classroom.

I propose that the goal of effective classroom management and discipline is to help all students to become more self-disciplined—that is, to regulate and manage their behavior in ways that promote social skillfulness, responsible decision making, and academic success.

### Three Approaches to Classroom Management and Discipline

There are three basic choices we can make when students get into behavioral or academic difficulties. We can choose to respond with threats, verbal assaults, and punishments. We can choose to ignore the problem and do nothing. Or we can engage in the practice of guided discipline where we become partners with students as we work out problems together.

#### The Guided Discipline Approach

As its heart, the word discipline has everything to do with instruction. Among its Latin origins are the words, *discipulus*, which means “teacher or disciple” and *disciplina*, which means “to teach.” Guided discipline is a combination of guided instruction and support, interventions and meaningful consequences that will help students learn and regularly practice more skillful behaviors and responsible decision-making. In contrast to punishment and doing nothing, meaningful consequences are done with and by a student—the intention is to help students take responsibility for their behavior or academic problems, understand the effects of their behavior on themselves and others, and learn and practice behaviors that are more skillful, responsible, and productive.

Guided discipline is “present and future oriented”; it focuses on the student’s need to regain control, self-correct, redirect focus, or get back on track. Positive and negative consequences are viewed as natural outcomes of the choices students make. Guided discipline involves a wide range of graduated and differentiated consequences and interventions. The idea is to match appropriate consequences to the frequency and severity of a problem behavior and provide the kind of instruction and support that best matches the needs of individual students. Rather than gutting heads as adversaries, teachers’ instruction, coaching, and support help student develop greater personal self-discipline and foster classroom habits and routines that create a more disciplined learning environment.

The concept of guided discipline is informed by beliefs that students are capable of reflecting on their mistakes and setbacks and can set goals and develop new strategies that will help them change their behavior. Students who experience guided discipline and support are more likely to feel trusted, cared for, and respected. These positive feelings are more likely to motivate students to improve their behavior and their academic efforts.

### Three Different Approaches to Classroom Management

Punishment	Do Nothing	Guided Discipline
Punishment is done to a student and consequences are often arbitrary. Punishment is about rule-breaking and payback without instruction or support.	Nothing is done to interrupt or change current behavior. Do nothing is about avoidance and reluctance due to fear of confrontation, fear of being disliked, uneasiness of using authority, disinterest in helping students change behavior, or a concern that effective intervention will take too much time or energy.	Guided discipline involves meaningful invitations, interventions, consequences, and problem solving done with a student. It is about support and practice building and maintaining relationships.
<b>Goal:</b> To verbally, emotionally, or physically threaten or inflict sufficient hurt, humiliation, discomfort, or deprivation so student will stop engaging in offending behavior to avoid punishment	<b>Goal:</b> To ignore misbehavior and hope that students will figure out behavioral norms and right themselves on their own	<b>Goal:</b> To help students take responsibility for their behavior or academic problems, understand the effects of their behavior, and learn and practice behaviors that are more skillful, successful, and responsible
<b>Orientation:</b> Past	<b>Orientation:</b> Present	<b>Orientation:</b> Present and Future
<b>Immediate Focus:</b> Teacher's need to exercise power, control, and authority over student	<b>Immediate Focus:</b> Attend to the needs of the rest of the class and keep focused on the task at hand	<b>Immediate Focus:</b> help student self-correct, regain control, redirect, and get back on track
<b>Effects on Student:</b> Likely to intensify feeling of anger, resentment, hostility, alienation, and defiance with little motivation to change	<b>Effects on Student:</b> Likely to encourage detachment and passivity or an inflated sense of power to act out, test limits, and challenge authority	<b>Effects on Student:</b> Likely to encourage feeling of being trusted, cared for, and respected with motivation to change

### Discipline Scenario

You have two students in different classes who manifest polar opposites of the same problem—putting down and ridiculing other kids whom they perceive as uncool and not “with it.” Mario is a very bright boy who is much too quick to call kids stupid, and sighs and smirks when students don’t “get it” as fast or as well as he does. The other boy, Greg, directs his sarcasm and ridicule toward anyone who acts “smart” or expresses any enthusiasm about what they are doing in class. In both classes their disrespectful behaviors have become chronic and they seem to suck the positive energy out of the air. You are worried about the negative impact of their behavior on other students and the learning environment, and you are also worried about the negative attitude you are beginning to have toward them.

**Punishment:** With both boys, the teacher has warned them about their attitudes, called their parents, and sent them to the office; but nothing seems to be working. Now their hostility toward other kids has rubbed off, and the teacher is increasingly hostile toward them. The teacher is aware that she is increasingly impatient, sarcastic, angry, and threatening with them—she finds herself tossing back zingers to these boys so they get a taste of what it feels like to be personally attacked. This is becoming a grudge match of who can deliver the most cutting verbal blow. The teacher has assigned several detentions to both boys who already have more than three detentions. The next step will be a suspension.

**Do Nothing:** The teacher has steeled herself to these students’ rudeness and has moved students who were the targets of their comments to other seats. The teacher doesn’t believe that he can do anything that will change their ingrained insensitivity. Real life is learning to toughen up and live with people you don’t like or who bother you.

**Guided Discipline:** The teacher has already had conferences with each boy, but has decided that a classroom intervention alone won’t be sufficient to address what feels pretty serious. He arranges for separate meeting with each boy, a parent, the counselor, and himself. The teacher wants to proceed in this way so that he can be a full participant in the conversations with the boys and their parents. It turns out that each boy feels isolated and different from the other students in class and take on the same roles of critic and judge at home. For each of them, it appears that their verbal assaults on others are a way of protecting themselves. In each conference the group develops a plan that includes the following:

**Mario has agreed to:**

- Meet with the counselor several more times to talk
- Keep a learning log where he will write about positive contributions that he notices that others make in class and write about the ways he is encouraging and supporting other students to be successful in class
- Spend one period a week doing peer tutoring instead of attending class

**The teacher has agreed to:**

- Note the changes he has observed in Mario's behavior toward others
- Check in with Mario once a week to assess the week and make a phone call home to the parents

**Greg has agreed to:**

- Meet with the counselor several more times to talk
- Keep a learning log where he will write about ways that he sees himself as smart in and out of class and write down what's going on when he feels frustrated in class
- Spend one period a week helping out in a special education PE class instead of attending class

**The teacher has agreed to:**

- Note the changes he has observed in Greg's behavior toward others
- Check in with Greg once a week to assess the week and make a phone call home to the parents
- Develop an academic plan with Greg so that he can improve his performance in class

My hope is that this brief snapshot makes a credible case that a guided discipline approach holds out the best prospect for helping students change their behavior. If there is a downside to guided discipline, it's about the amount of time needed for planning, implementation, and follow-up. For this reason, you might not be able to always implement the ideal solution. But guided discipline can still inform every decision. The upside, however, is huge. You are likely to have fewer disruptions and problematic behaviors and more motivated and self-disciplined learners. The section that follows describes in detail five steps for implementing guided discipline in the classroom.

### Implementing Guided Discipline

Guided Discipline is a combination of guided instruction, reflection, support, interventions, and meaningful consequences that will help students learn and regularly practice more skillful behaviors and responsible decision-making.



*The paint palette icons below indicate points that are described in greater detail in the Tools to Begin Using the Five Steps to Guided Discipline segment of this resource (page 207).*

### The Five Steps for Implementing Guided Discipline

1. Awareness—Know Yourself, Know Your Students, Know Your School
  - What is your teaching stance? Where does your authority come from?
  - What are your discipline goals, your “No’s,” your triggers and reducers?
  - What will help you deal effectively with adolescents’ disrespectful speech?



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- What kinds of teacher behaviors will set your kids off?
- What kinds of teacher support will help your kids become more self-disciplined and engage in more skillful behaviors more of the time?

### 2. Prevention



- Help students get ready to learn
- Establish positive group agreements, norms, goals, and expectations
- Set clear boundaries and explain what makes a behavior a boundary violation
- Teach and practice procedures and problem solving protocols
- Build group cohesion and connectedness in the classroom
- Develop personal connections with each student
- Practice negotiated learning and group problem solving
- Model and teach life skills

### 3. Invitations



- Invite cooperation using verbal and written prompts
- Give students opportunities to self-correct
- Offer chances to make a choice
- Help students to redirect their focus
- Use two minute problem solving strategies
- Let students know what they can do when they're upset and angry
- When invitations don't work, interrupt and de-escalate conflicts and confrontations quickly and calmly

### 4. Interventions



- Clarify the differences between (1) boundary violations, (2) procedural infractions, and (3) intra- and inter-personal conflicts and problems
- Begin student conferences by listening first and defusing students' upset feelings before you problem solve
- Make sure that problem solving reports, behavior plans, and academic contracts play a central role in follow-up consequences
- Communicate with parents by phone, e-mail, notes, and conferences
- Use class meetings to discuss problems and concerns that affect the whole group
- Refer students to mediation, counseling services, and student assistance programs



## 5. Support and Maintenance

- Provide immediate feedback when students are trying out new skills and behaviors
- Create classroom routines and rituals that involve every student
- Make connections through 10 second “hits”
- Recognize and celebrate the group’s efforts and accomplishments
- Recognize individual accomplishments in and out of the classroom
- Provide differentiated support for students who are struggling
- Create opportunities for students to link personal effort to their successes in the classroom

## Tools to Begin Using the Five Steps to Guided Discipline



### 1. Awareness

What are your own triggers? What are your reducers? How do you express your anger?

Knowing what sets you off is a good thing. You have the advantage of preparing yourself for what to say and do when your anger button is pushed, and you can let students know where not to go. When you do get upset, frustrated, or angry, what are the reducers? What will help you to stop, defuse the emotional charge that you feel, and get re-centered so that you can think clearly about what to do next? For example, you might experience a situation where you feel so upset that your best response is to stop what you are doing, take a few deep breaths, walk to the other side of the room, and say, “I’m too angry to deal with this right now; we’ll make a time later to talk about this when I can hear you and you can hear me.” When the class has really blown it behaviorally or academically, how do you want to communicate your negative feelings? Expressing your frustration, anger, and disappointment is a tricky thing. Do it too often and it sounds like a broken record to kids: “Blah, blah, blah . . . here she goes again.” Think about picking your battles carefully. Expressing negative feelings has a different impact if you do it once a month rather than several times a week. If you rehearse what you want to say and know how you want to involve students in addressing the issue, your message will have a greater impact on more students.

What kind of time commitment are you willing to make to implement a discipline plan that works effectively for you and all of your students? This is probably the biggest question of all. Classroom discipline is an area where the more time you put in, especially in the beginning of the year, the more satisfied you’ll be with the results. “Front-loading” mini-sessions about all things disciplinary in the first month of school will ensure that your discipline goals, procedures, and protocols are crystal clear to everyone.



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One way to support your own intentional practice of implementing guided discipline is to set aside three to four hours each week of out-of-class time that are expressly devoted to discipline planning, implementation, and follow-up. If this becomes a weekly routine, it's not nearly so daunting to make that parent phone call or meet with a group of students in out-of-class time during planning periods or before or after school. Here's what three and a half hours a week (210 minutes) of out-of-class time can get you:

- 50 minutes — Eight “problem calls” a week to parents—to inform parents of behavior or academic problems; to discuss student conferences, discipline plans, problem solving reports, academic contracts; to discuss follow-up consequences; to update a student's progress; or make arrangements for a parent-student-teacher conference.
- 25 minutes — One lunch period to conference with students and work with them on discipline plans, self-management strategies, problem solving reports, and academic contracts
- 60 minutes — One after or before school “Conference Hour” to work with students on discipline plans, self-management strategies, problem solving reports, and academic contracts
- 30 minutes — Five “Sunshine Calls” a week to parents—the goal is to talk to every parent at some point during the semester sharing something their child has done well and something you appreciate about their child
- 15 minutes — 20 thirty second feedback and appreciation notes to students
- 30 minutes — Two one-on-one sessions with students who really need an extra dose of connection, support, and encouragement

In addition, think about how you can integrate discipline practices and protocols into your weekly class plan. During five days of 50-minute classes, here's what you could do:

- During your “Getting to Work” activity that students do upon entering class, you can do two minute check-in's with ten students, two each day.
- Make sure every student gets a positive ten second comment twice a week (when you meet and greet at the door, when students are engaged in group work or independent work).
- Open or close the week with a 10-15 minute activity that focuses on goal-setting, reflection, and behavioral and academic self-assessment.



- Do at least one gathering that ensures that everyone in the class gets an opportunity to respond to a question of the week.
- Review discipline policies, procedures, and problem solving protocols as needed.
- Infuse the teaching for practice of a least two Life Skills into your regular curriculum.
- Facilitate a brief class meeting to discuss a concern that affects the whole class, or negotiate a classroom decision.



## 2. Prevention

### Teach problem solving protocols

Help students to recognize that they always have choices and have control over their behavior. Review the kinds of invitations and interventions that you will use in the classroom, reminding students that the goal will always be to provide information students can use to make a responsible choice for how to self-correct and redirect their behavior. Take time to teach everyone A, B, C, D, E problem solving. This five step process is used throughout the guide for individual, interpersonal, and group problem solving.

**ASSESS** the situation and **ASK**, What's the problem?

**BRAINSTORM** at least two solutions

**CONSIDER** the pro's and con's of each choice

**DECIDE** on the best choice

**EVALUATE** your decision after it has been implemented



## 3. Invitations

### Use two minute problem solving strategies

- For students who are stuck, ask them to take two minutes to think through the ABCD problem solving process. Check back with them in two minutes so they can tell you their decision.

**ASSESS** the situation and **ASK**, What's the problem?

**BRAINSTORM** at least two solutions

**CONSIDER** the pro's and con's of each choice

Make your best **DECISION**

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- When two students are involved in a conflict, you can ask them both to take two minutes to write down 1) what's not working and why; 2) what I need to work it out; and 3) two solutions I'm willing to try. Check back with both of them in two minutes to share solutions and ask them to choose one that will work for both of them.
- When it is appropriate, focus on Win-Win solutions rather than consequences. Ask the student to name the problem and suggest a solution to resolve it.
- When students are reluctant to participate in a particular activity or work on a specific assignment, ask them to take a minute and write down an alternative way to complete a task or meet the goal or expectation. If we insist that there is only one way to do the task or that students must do it our way, we risk provoking further resistance.
- When you notice a student who is having trouble getting started, take a minute to say, "I've noticed you're having a hard time getting started. Stop for a minute, and write down in your own words what you think the task is. Then name one thing that's getting in the way of doing it and one thing you can do to feel like you've accomplished something today."
- When you hear a complaint or concern, just say, "And?" to give the student the space to be more specific and make a responsible suggestion.

When invitations don't work, interrupt and de-escalate conflicts and confrontational behavior quickly and calmly

Keep these questions in mind before you intervene with a student:

- What are my long-term goals for the student—academically and behaviorally?
- What do I say and do now to maintain the relationship?
- What do I say and do now in public? What do I say and do later in private?
- How do I create the physical and emotional space for the student to save face?

Just a reminder to teachers that you have (or must develop) your own communication style with your students, and the “talking points” below are meant to provide ideas about what the Guided Discipline Approach sounds like in action. As you read them, think about similar situations you have encountered and write down what your responses would be. Are they similar or different? What do your students respond to? Would you alter certain interactions?

Try one of these strategies to de-escalate potential power struggles, knowing that no strategy will work for every student. What you say to a boy with whom you have a solid relationship will differ from your strategy with the girl in the corner who’s angry all the time and waiting for any excuse to stir thing up.

- “Drop the rope” in power struggles or try not picking up “the rope” at all. Remind yourself that the goal right now is to de-escalate the situation by lowering the decibel level, defusing the emotional intensity, and diminishing the drama. You might say, “I’m not going to argue about this now.” Or, “I’m through discussing this for now.” Or, “I heard what you said and I need to think about it.”
- Call their bluff. “Which is it going to be? Work with me after school or solve it yourself here in the classroom?”
- Notice the problem and postpone dealing with it until you have the space and time for a private conversation.
- For students who are argumentative or hostile to what other students say, you might try, “You have the right to your opinion [belief, feelings]. Can you try and summarize both points of view?” Or, “Can you restate that as a question?”
- When students who are visibly upset or angry about something said in a discussion, say, “You had a really strong reaction to that comment. Let’s hear what others feel about this.”
- Accept the feelings even as you stop the unacceptable behavior. “I know you’re upset about this and that you know the consequence.” Or, “I know you’re angry and you know the drill. Right?” Or, “I can see how angry you are and I don’t want you to have to leave class. Here’s the deal. Do you think you can \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ for the rest of the period?” Or, “I know you think this is unfair, and I want to talk with you about it later. Right now, I need you to \_\_\_\_\_. Can you do that?”
- When a student is geared up to argue with you, state both viewpoints. “Here’s how I see it and here’s how you see it. Do I have that about right? For the moment we’re going to have to agree to disagree. Can you do that?”

- For students who count on a “push back” response, acknowledge their power, “You’re right. I can’t make you do this,” and move on.
- Refuse to take responsibility for the student’s actions by pointing out the choice that they are making and the consequences of that choice.
- Offer an exit statement. “I’m not going to get in a power struggle with you over this now.” Or, “I’ve said what I needed to say. You’re the one who’s in charge of what happens next.”
- Say, “I want to keep your personal business personal. Let’s step outside a minute and hear each other out.”



### 4. Interventions

#### **Make one-on-one conferencing a daily practice**

Teacher-student conferencing (from the one minute check-in to longer conferences to address serious issues) serves many purposes. It’s the ideal structure for listening when students are upset, for identifying academic and behavioral problems, for problem solving with a student, and for discussing students’ completed report forms after they have committed violations and infractions.

A useful guideline for one-on-one conferences is to listen first, defuse student’s upset feelings, and find out more information before you problem solve. Here are some suggestions for getting the most out of student conferences:

Begin conferences by inviting students to speak first. You might use any of these openers:

- “So what’s up?” “What’s going on?” “What was that about yesterday?” “A lot’s been going on. Tell me what you’re feeling right now.” “You really sounded upset earlier. Is that right?” “So tell me what I should know about what happened.”
- Then stop and wait for a response before you say anything else. The goal is to defuse the emotional charge and let the student know that you’re willing to listen.

A couple reminders about listening. . .

- Listening to a student doesn’t mean you agree with what the student is saying.
- Listening confers respect and indicates you desire to understand the student.

- Listen first and listen attentively—before you assume, judge, correct, or problem solve.
- Don't get defensive and take the student's upset feeling personally—you're the one using your skills to defuse and understand.
- Defuse the student's upset feelings by acknowledging and reflecting the student's feeling and emotional state and restating what the student has said so he or she knows you understood.
- Encourage the person to talk by saying, "Tell me more," "What happened?," "How do you feel about that?," "What do you need right now?," "Is there anything else bothering you?"

When students bring a problem to you:

- Tell them that you appreciate their willingness to talk about it.
- Say little and let the student talk it through.
- Ask the student if he or she wants to problem solve. Sometimes just listening to a student's story is enough. If a student does want to problem solve, you might ask, "Where would you like to go from here?" Or, "What would a good solution look like?" Or, "What might be one step you can take toward resolving this today?"

Try to identify sources of misbehavior and explore other ways to meet that need. For example, was the misbehavior a way to gain attention, exercise power, protect one's identity and dignity, seek revenge, or convey inadequacy?

When young people use absolutes or they over-generalize, help them to clarify their thinking and speak more precisely to their own situation. You can respond by saying, "Always? That never happens? Everyone does that? Are you sure that you're the only person who . . . ?"

With students who are really having a hard time, choose to work on one behavior at a time. Try to eliminate or limit any negative feedback. Ask the student what you as a teacher can do to help. Create a daily check-in with the student. Give encouraging feedback when you see the student engaging in the desired behavior.

When conferences get bogged down—when you're stuck or a student is stuck try these responses:

- It sounds like you're not ready to talk about this, so I will have to decide.
- I'm unwilling to try that because \_\_\_\_\_. Do you have another idea?

- That's a good idea. What consequence do you think would be fair if you don't do this?
- I want to hear what you have to say and I want you to hear what I have to say. Can we try that?
- I'm not interested in fault finding or blaming. I'm interested in solutions.

For students who continue to express disinterest, dislike, or boredom with the course, it is hard to help them move out of the land of “not learning” without naming what is making this a bad experience for them. You might say, “It sound like you're really stuck and can't find a way to make this class okay for you. So let's start where you are. Cover a page with everything you dislike about class. Then we'll talk and if we can work together to find a way out of this.” This strategy can produce three positive results. First, you're catching a student off guard because you're not asking her to pretend that everything's fine when it isn't. You're validating that a student's negative feelings are real. Second, you're telling the student that, “Just because you don't like class, doesn't mean I can't like you.” You're communicating that it's worth your time to listen and try and understand what's going on. Third, this kind of quick exercise usually provides a lot of information that can be useful in plumbing underlying resistance, and it gives the two of you a place to begin working on a plan.



## **5. Support and Maintenance**

An annoying reality of adolescence is that good behavior and a positive peer culture don't sustain themselves without a big dose of what Linda Albert refers to as the five A's: ACCEPTANCE, ATTENTION, APPRECIATION, AFFIRMATION, and AFFECTION. If you were to set aside 15 minutes a week in each class to support and maintain the positive behaviors of individual students and the group, what would you choose to do?

Provide immediate feedback when students are trying out new skills and behaviors.

- Give encouraging feedback that describes what students have accomplished and names the personal quality that they used to do it.
- Emphasize a specific skill you will observe and students will practice each week. Provide feedback on how the group and individual students are using the skill regularly and successfully.
- When someone has had a bad day, write a note with words of encouragement and a reminder that they can start fresh the next day.
- Be particularly mindful of situations where students have recovered and bounced back from personal setbacks. Encourage students to tell you what they have learned from these experiences.

- Notice when students do something “out of character” that reveals a different image of themselves.
- Write notes that show that you have noticed the effort students have make to keep their academic contract commitments or sustain a significant change in their classroom behavior.
- Create classroom routines and rituals that involve EVERY STUDENT.
- Recognize and celebrate the group’s efforts and accomplishments.
- Recognize individual accomplishments in and out of the classroom.

Provide differentiated support for students who are struggling.

- Create a set of quotes about people who have overcome great challenges and personal difficulties. Give a quote to a student when you want to acknowledge that they are having a rough time of it and share that other people have overcome difficult circumstances and found meaning and success in their lives.
- Invite a student who needs a little boost of encouragement and support to eat lunch with you.
- For students who have a particularly difficult time dealing with managing anger, controlling their impulses, or handling interpersonal conflict, invite them to write themselves a “congratulations” note when they felt they handled a tough situation effectively.
- Read “Thank You Mr. Falker,” by Patricia Polacco.
- Hook up a struggling student with a former student who can share what she or he did to turn things around in class.
- Set up 30 second daily check-in’s with students who need to be on a short leash. These are the kids who need to know you are not going to stop noticing how they are doing.

Create opportunities for students to link personal effort to their successes in the classroom.

- Encourage students to keep a checklist of skills they are learning and mastering.
- Ask students to review the list of self-awareness and self-management skills and identify skills they have improved during the past quarter and skills they want to work on during the next quarter.
- Invite students to tell you one thing they have accomplished this week that they didn’t think they could have done a month ago.





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### Blue Form: Inappropriate/Disrespectful Remarks

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

1. What did I say that was inappropriate or disrespectful?

2. How was this inappropriate or disrespectful? Identify the impact on students, staff, classroom, or the school environment.

3. Which fits?

☐ It would have been better not to say this at all because . . .

☐ I could have said it this way:

4. Next time I feel this way, I could try:

A.

B.

C.

Staff Person's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Follow up:

## **Problem Solving Conference Form**

### **Getting the Story Out**

What did you do that got you here?

What happened?

How are you feeling about what happened?

### **Taking Responsibility**

How did your behavior affect others or the learning environment?

When you got in trouble, what were you supposed to be doing?

How did your behavior get in the way of your own learning?

### **Problem Solving**

What could you have done instead that would have been a better choice?

What can you do the next time you're in this situation?

What steps can you take to prevent this from happening again?

### **Getting Support and Keeping on Track**

What can the teacher do to support your change in behavior?

What else can you do for yourself to help keep on track?

